



Committee on Homeland Security

Democrats
Bennie G. Thompson, Ranking Member

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TRANSPORTATION TRADE DEPARTMENT SUPPORTS DEMOCRATIC HOUSE BILL:

“Secure TRAINS Act”

WASHINGTON—Several prominent Democratic members of the House of Representatives today introduced the “Secure Transit and Railroads across America and Investment in National Security Act of 2005,” (or the “Secure TRAINS Act”) to correct the present security vulnerabilities 30 million Americans face everyday while using passenger rail and public transportation.

The Secure TRAINS Act introduced by Rep. Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS), Ranking Member of the U.S. House on Homeland Security, Democratic Caucus Chairman Rep. Robert Menendez (D-N.J.), Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.) and others would address the unreasonable lack of funding levels for transit security by creating dedicated funding for rail and transit security. The bill would once again require the Department of Homeland Security to submit a National Transportation Security Plan for the nation’s entire transportation systems.

The AFL-CIO’s Transportation Trades Department has commended the Democrats’ bill stating that the lack of funding Congress has given to America’s transportation sector is hazardous to the commuting public and needs to be handled accordingly. “We cannot allow our government’s ‘all talk, no action’ approach to transit and rail security to continue one day longer. We spend six-tenths of a penny per passenger on transit security, compared to \$9.16 per airline passenger. The Secure TRAINS Act of 2005 is a badly-needed step to reversing our dangerous inattention to vulnerabilities in our transportation system,” said Edward Wytkind, President of the Transportation Trades Department.

“The deadly bombings on commuter trains in London last week and Madrid last year should be a wake up call for this country,” noted Rep. Bennie Thompson (D-MS). “If the Administration does not move faster, I fear our nation will face the nightmare victims in those cities have experienced.”

When he was head of the Transportation Security Administration, Admiral James Loy promised the National Transportation Security Plan would be completed by the end of 2003. Congress later ordered the DHS to complete the report by April 1 of this year—but it’s still pending.

The bill would also provide whistleblower protections for transit employees who identify light problems in transit security. These are the same protections stockbrokers and accountants already get when reporting corporate fraud.

“We should take the necessary steps to keep terrorists out of New York’s subways, Boston’s T, Chicago’s El, Washington D.C.’s metro and the hundreds of bus systems across our nation.”

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